

FACT SHEET --- Health & Welfare Planning in Philadelphia

THE HEALTH & WELFARE COUNCIL, INC. . . .

established first in 1921, incorporated in its present form in 1947, has an organizational membership of just under 300 and covers an area of 800 square miles. . . .

It is governed by a Delegate Assembly (2 from each member group) under which is a Board of Directors, under which is the Executive Committee.

The Council is sub-divided in two ways -- into geographic units and into service units which give service to all geographic units, member agencies and organizations, communities and individuals. (See diagram and map, right).

GEOGRAPHICALLY the Council is made up of 3 "Districts", one covering each of the three Counties. Montgomery and Delaware Districts work mainly on a project committee basis; Philadelphia District, H & W Council, however, is further divided into six Areas which cover the entire City (same as County): Southern, West, North Central, Northern, Northwest (the Germantown Community Council) and Northeast (Northeast United Services).

Each geographic unit has its own governing body (with varying names and compositions) and enough autonomy so it can shape itself to the needs of the area it covers. Most Area organizations in Philadelphia have the usual standing committees (Health, Recreation).

All Area offices work closely with social agencies, the degree varying with the age of the Area office and the type of community. In Germantown the office was established in 1934 and the agencies work with it closely; in the Northeast the office was opened in 1951, but (a) early emphasis was on fund raising; (b) planning emphasis is on future, not past problems, and (c) there are no agencies in the Area; relationships are excellent, but not numerous or typical.

TYPICAL PROJECTS: South (started in 1949), a City plan for a \$500,000 recreation center opposed - the leadership wanted two \$250,000 centers in different sections. Their view prevailed. West (started in 1945), organized and got support for a day care center; 3 years later helped transfer the support to a public agency. North Central (started in 1942), working with a 1939 City master plan for modern health centers managed to get the first one allocated to their area; it opens in 1957.



Council on Volunteers
Research Department
Public Relations
Info and Referral
DIVISIONS - on Aged
- on Children
- on Education-Recreation
- on Health (includes
Dental Clinic, Health Education,
Nursing Council, Rehabilitation)
- on Family

NORTHEAST UNITED SERVICES, the Northeast Area office of the Philadelphia District, Health & Welfare Council, Inc. is an example of an area operation tailored to its neighborhoods. Covering 40 square miles and (in 1955) 310,000 people in some 18 "communities" which are merging physically with growth but not psychologically, NUS has no organizational members, but a constantly changing individual membership under "automatic" provisions in the by-laws. The governing bodies, under the by-laws, have proportional representation from the communities; NUS members are all those active on committees (Health, Education-Recreation, Public Relations), all presidents of civic leagues, community councils, service clubs, parent-teacher groups, and lay governing bodies of churches; all supervisory staff members, and board members of local social agencies; and all volunteers (except solicitors) in the local branch of the United Community Campaign (successor to the Community Chest). One of NUS's most important on-going projects, in view of the greatly increasing population, many many new homes, and a fairly large population turn-over as people move on north into Bucks County, consists simply of trying to keep the leadership informed of what is going on. This is one reason why NUS alone of the Areas, has a regular newsletter and formal public relations committee. It also emphasizes liaison work between neighborhood groups and City-wide governmental or non-governmental bodies and provides, without necessarily taking a stand or taking part, a common ground for local and city representatives to enable them to iron out problems.

Where other Area offices, generally speaking, deal mostly with existing problems of social needs and ways to meet those needs (working with agencies), NUS focusses its attention on the future - which is coming to the area faster than it can be coped with. One example on the attached map, Neighborhood number 4, Airport, had a population of 562 in 1940; in 1950 it was 6,137, and in 1955, 10,074. Area 11 has gone from 8,948 in 1940 to 19,449 in 1955.

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